

## Document A (ORIGINAL)

*In 1858, Abraham Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for a seat in the U.S. Senate. The two engaged in a series of seven public debates, which attracted national attention. Although Lincoln lost the election, he became widely known for his views on slavery.*

If you desire negro citizenship, if you desire to allow them to come into the State and settle with the white man, if you desire them to vote on an equality with yourselves, and to make them eligible to office, to serve on juries, and to adjudge your rights, then support Mr. Lincoln and the Black Republican party, who are in favor of the citizenship of the negro. For one, I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. I believe this government was made on the white basis. I believe it was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever, and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men, men of European birth and descent, instead of conferring it upon negroes, Indians, and other inferior races.

Mr. Lincoln, following the example and lead of all the little Abolition orators who go around and lecture in the basements of schools and churches, reads from the Declaration of Independence that all men were created equal, and then asks how can you deprive a negro of that equality which God and the Declaration of Independence award to him? He and they maintain that negro equality is guaranteed by the laws of God, and that it is asserted in the Declaration of Independence. If they think so, of course they have a right to say so, and so vote. I do not question Mr. Lincoln's conscientious belief that the negro was made his equal, and hence is his brother; but for my own part, I do not regard the negro as my equal, and positively deny that he is my brother or any kin to me whatever.

**Source:** *An excerpt from Stephen A. Douglas's argument in the first Lincoln-Douglas debate at Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858.*

## Document B (ORIGINAL)

I have no purpose, either directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence-the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects-certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man.

**Source:** *From Abraham Lincoln's reply to Stephen A. Douglas at Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858.*

## Document C (ORIGINAL)

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., September 27, 1841.  
MISS MARY SPEED, Louisville, Ky.

*My Friend:* Having resolved to write to some other's family, and not having the express permission of any one of them to do so, I had some little difficulty in determining which to inflict the task of reading what I feel must be a most dull and silly letter; when I remembered that you and I were something of cronies while I was at Farmington and that while there I was under the necessity of shutting you up in a room to prevent your committing an assault and battery upon me, I decided that you should be the devoted one....By the way, a fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve negroes in different parts of Kentucky, and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together. A small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this was fastened to the main chain by a shorter one, at a convenient distance from the others, so that the negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trotline. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends their fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters, and many of them from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery, where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless and unrelenting than any other where; and yet amid all these distressing circumstances, as we would think them they were the most cheerful and apparently happy creatures on board. One whose offense for which he had been sold was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually, and the others danced, sang, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true it is that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," or in other words, that he renders the worst of human conditions tolerable while he permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable....

Your sincere friend,  
A. LINCOLN.

**Source:** *Abraham Lincoln, writing in a letter to Mary Speed, a personal friend, September 27, 1841.*

## Document D (ORIGINAL)

God himself has made them for usefulness as slaves, and requires us to employ them as such, and if we betray our trust, and throw them off on their own resources, we reconvert them into barbarians, and we shall be compelled to atone for our sin towards them through all time.

Our Heavenly Father has made us to rule, and the negroes to serve, and if we, through a pretended sympathy, or a false philanthropy, right in the face of all common sense and reason, set aside his holy arrangements for the good of mankind and his own glory, and tamper with his laws, we shall be overthrown and eternally degraded, and perhaps made subjects of some other civilized nation. This will be our doom as sure as God lives. Then, will you persevere in such foolery, right in the face of truth and righteousness, with your heaven-daring schemes of wickedness, that will as assuredly overthrow this great and glorious Union as the scheme shall be adopted, or bring about the extermination of the whole negro race in this country ? The laws of nature and nature's God prohibit the mixing of the two colors into one blood, which ends that plan. Colonization in their native land of all the negroes would be so nearly impracticable, that it will never be done, and no other spot on this green earth will do for them. It would be the height of cruelty and barbarism to send them anywhere else. If they could all be colonized on the coast of Africa, they would fall back into heathenism and barbarism in less than fifty years....

**Source:** *From Pictures of Slavery and Anti-Slavery: Advantages of Negro Slavery and the Benefits of Negro Freedom Morally, Socially, and Politically Considered by John Bell Robinson, a White pro-slavery spokesperson, Pennsylvania, 1863, p. 42.*